

*Dr. Jeanne Linsdell, Director of Technical Communication, College of Engineering at San Jose State, CA teaches a course titled “Engineering Reports on the Earth and Environment”. As part of the curriculum, practicing industry engineers are welcomed as guest speakers to discuss transportation projects with students and the impacts they have on the environment. Dr. Linsdell’s class received a presentation on the BART Silicon Valley Project and was given one hour to write an essay about the importance of this regional transportation improvement project that will provide substantial economic and environmental benefits for the Bay Area and beyond. Here is what a few of them had to say:*



## Robert Cheng

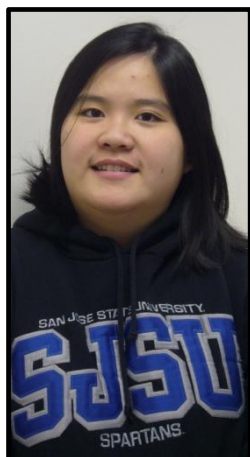


Today, as an engineering student concerned with the environment, I believe public transportation is necessary in the Bay Area because it is one of the factors that can substantially help promote a sustainable environment. We need all the help we can get in the over populated Bay Area. Using public transportation is a huge way for the general public to help preserve the environment for the present and future generations. With the encouragement and support of the government, I think that BART can be ‘the best’ way to get around. The government can quickly and easily raise awareness of the problem of pollution and suggest BART as one of the many things the general population can do to help lower pollution. If the government supports BART, the fares for riding could be reduced to a price where everyone is able to ride and also BART can further engineer their transit system, mainly the trains, to be more efficient. This will be a ‘win-win’ situation for both the general population and for the environment for our future.

## Caleb Russom

As an engineering student concerned with a sustainable environment, public transportation is important because it simply helps the environment in many ways. I would one day like my kids to see the planet the same way I see it now. Growing up, most of my family lived in the Oakland and Berkeley area. So when I would go up north to visit them, they would always take me to all sorts of different places such as malls and attractions. If it was not for the BART system, I do not think that I would have seen my family as often. Every single one of them had a positive influence on me and kept me on the right track, and if it was not for their motivation I do not know where I would have ended up.

## Esther Foo



In general, I think the BART system will really be a great improvement to the current available public transportation. The public can benefit from the BART system, especially those who commute daily all the way from further north to downtown San Jose. This is because the extension is expected to close around 20 miles of gap in the current regional rail network. I think it is crucial for our government to encourage and support any kind of public transportation because it will improve the quality of life of our residents. There is more to good transportation systems other than just convenience and comfort. If there is a good public transportation system, I believe most people would choose to ride on these transportations rather than to drive. This would in turn reduce the emission of harmful gases to the environment significantly. As a result, we will be reducing pollution which will lead to better health for the residents. Besides, the major congestion on different freeways will also be alleviated with the reduced number of vehicles on the road. BART will lessen the travel time for commuters as it travels quicker on its own rail tracks and not have to be stuck in congestion with other vehicles.

### ***Everardo Ochoa***



As a San Jose State University student living away from home without a vehicle I turned to alternate forms of transportation. VTA has met my transportation needs diligently. However, I always found it a hassle to take bus 180 from downtown San Jose to Fremont to take BART to Berkeley or San Francisco to visit friends. Extending BART through the Silicon Valley Project brings a smile to face as it will help connect our transportation system and enhance the community. BART will merge with VTA transportation system allowing the community to take any form of transportation needed from light rail to Amtrak. By offering improved mobility this new project will help remove cars of the road in an effort to reduce emissions released by vehicles and reduce the usage of fossil fuels. BART will also stimulate the economy locally in an effort to stimulate California out of the slump that we are in. As California goes through hard times and with an election around the corner it is crucial that California gets its economy up and running. This project is a step in the right direction and there is no doubt in my mind that it will do nothing less than have a positive impact on our state.

### ***Hieu Pham***



Since the number of companies and manufacturers has been increasing in the Silicon Valley, a lot of people have been moving to the Bay Area to find opportunities. Thus, the amount of vehicles running on the roads has been increasing steadily. This causes traffic problems every morning and leads to wasted time and money. For example, the distance from Fremont to San Jose is only around 20 miles, but it takes around 60 minutes to travel throughout this distance either on the 880 or 680 freeways in the morning. If the BART is extended, I am sure that a lot of people will ride on it instead of driving their own vehicles because they would be able to conveniently save time and money. Every year, our government has to spend a lot of money to maintain the existing roads and construct many new roads. Maintaining the current roads is necessary, but constructing new roads should be reconsidered because there are better options which can save more money in the long term. For instance, expanding BART will lead to a reduction in pressure on constructing new roads. Compared to BART, the road cannot carry the same number of commuters. By building one BART route, the government can avoid building many new roads in the same area.

### ***Jie Ma***



The Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART) not only provides an option for going to work, to school, to visit sights, but it also saves a lot energy, since everyone using BART is off the freeway. Public transportation should get government's attention because people using it save energy. If BART can be used by more people and become a major transportation tool for everyone, then we can save the energy consumption sharply and reduce air pollution rapidly. As an Engineering student at San Jose State University I know that's important. BART represents a hopeful future for the Bay Area because it has a schedule which can keep everyone on time, not like the unpredicted conditions on the road. It also helps slow traffic in rush hours, reducing fossil fuel CO2 emissions sharply. BART makes it possible for many of us to travel in the Bay Area.

### ***Vilney Ochoa***



I strongly believe that the government must encourage and support public transportation because it is good for the environment, is energy efficient, and is convenient for commuters. Public transportation always benefits all commuters. In my case, I take the train from Redwood City to San Jose. In San Jose I take the bus to San Jose State University; the bus stops right in front of campus. I know many students use public transportation, and there are many other persons who commute to work and other destinations. The development and improvement of public transportation is always good for the environment, for the country, and for the people. I hope the Federal Transit Administration is aware of this and make the right decision of funding the BART Silicon Valley Project.